

SB 46

SENATE JUDICIARY

EXHIBIT NO.

29

February 11, 2009

2/11/09

FILE NO.

SB 46

Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am writing you in opposition to SB46.

I want to share about 4 women—my mother, my mother-in-law, myself and my daughter. I'll begin with my mother. She gave birth to six children. Between her first and second child, she had a miscarriage. My mother-in law also gave birth to 6 children. Her second child died of an enlarged heart two days after being born. One of her daughters has had a total of 6 miscarriages and was fortunate to carry two pregnancies to full term and has two grown children.

My first pregnancy ended in a miscarriage. Two years later, I gave birth to an 8 lb. 11 oz. son and then, over the years, to 5 more children; a total of 5 boys and one girl.

My daughter's first child was born in Salt Lake City because part of my granddaughter's intestines developed on the outside of her body and she needed emergency surgery. My daughter's second pregnancy ended in a miscarriage. She then gave birth to three more children. A year ago it was discovered that her second daughter has an extra kidney and had to have surgery to correct a medical problem that the extra kidney was causing.

I don't think that these situations that I have described are that uncommon. Christiane Northrup, M.D., a gynecologist and Assistant Clinical Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Vermont College of Medicine, in her book, *Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom*, says, "Approximately one in six pregnancies ends in miscarriage. I tell women that miscarriage is usually nature's way of getting rid of conceptions that will not result in healthy babies."

I personally know women who long to have children and have never been able to get pregnant; women who spend their nine months of pregnancy, like myself, with only a small amount of morning sickness; I know others who have been sick the whole time, a few that have struggled to carry their baby to term and of course women, as I, who have had miscarriages.

I am a composite of many men and woman who were born before me in my family. My genetics are very unique to me and the same applies to the women I have talked about as well as all of you and all human beings.

When I consider SB46, I can't wrap my mind around, first of all, why the state would want a compelling interest in the unborn. And beyond that, how the state would go about monitoring this compelling interest. How would that be done?

It seems to me that a woman would be put on trial if any number of things happened during her pregnancy. As I talk about my own family, we would have all been under suspicion in light of this proposed amendment because of our miscarriages.

I get angry because sometimes the message I get as a woman is that I'm stupid, that I don't have the knowledge, the intelligence, the ability, or the compassion to make good and right decisions about my life and about my children. I speak in terms of MY children because 10 years ago my husband died of cancer so I've spent several years thinking of my children as mine when in fact they are our children.

In our society, it is generally the woman who is regarded as the main nurturer of children; it's a role women have been given. Most of our school teachers in the younger grades are women, our day care providers are mostly women. It seems that we are good enough to nurture and care for our children but we cannot be trusted to make decisions about having them and being concerned about our pregnancies.

There are things in this life that we don't have control over and how a woman's body handles a particular pregnancy is one of them and how we think we can legislate that, again, is beyond my comprehension.

Many women miscarry and it's a very devastating experience. To place additional trauma on a woman, her partner and family by a suspicion that she intentionally did something to cause that miscarriage is unthinkable.

I urge you to vote no to SB46, Judy Reel
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